

- (a) providing epithelial tissue from said mammal;
- (b) culturing said epithelial tissue under conditions in which multipotent stem cells proliferate and in which at least 25% of the cells that are not multipotent stem cells die or attach to the culture substrate; and
- (c) continuing culture step (b) until at least 30% of the cells are multipotent stem cells which are self renewing, form non-adherent clusters, express nestin, and can differentiate into neuronal and mesodermal cell types, or progeny of said multipotent stem cells.

19. **(Amended)** A method of producing a population of at least ten cells, wherein at least 30% of the cells are multipotent stem cells substantially purified from epithelial tissue of a postnatal mammal, or progeny of said multipotent stem cells, wherein said multipotent stem cells are self renewing, form non-adherent clusters, express nestin, and can differentiate into neuronal and mesodermal cell types, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing epithelial tissue from said mammal;
- (b) culturing said epithelial tissue under conditions in which multipotent stem cells proliferate and in which at least 25% of the cells that are not multipotent stem cells die or attach to the culture substrate;
- (c) separating said multipotent stem cells from said cells that attach to said culture substrate; and
- (d) repeating steps (b) and (c) until at least 30% of the cells are multipotent stem cells which are self renewing, form non-adherent clusters, express nestin, and can differentiate into neuronal and mesodermal cell types, or progeny of said multipotent stem cells.

20. **(Reiterated)** The method of claim 19, wherein said population is at least one hundred cells.

◇◇ Please add the following new claims:

- 43. **(New)** The method of claim 18 or 19, wherein said epithelial tissue is skin.
- 44. **(New)** The method of claim 18 or 19, wherein said epithelial tissue is tongue.

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45. (New) The method of claim 18 or 19, wherein said epithelial tissue is not olfactory epithelium.

46. (New) The method of claim 18 or 19, wherein said postnatal mammal is a human.

add c2

The amended claims are restated below to reflect changes from the last filing.

18. (Amended) A method of producing a population of at least ten cells, wherein at least 30% of the cells are multipotent stem cells substantially purified from epithelial tissue of a postnatal mammal, or progeny of said multipotent stem cells, wherein said multipotent stem cells are self renewing, form non-adherent clusters, express nestin, and can differentiate into neuronal and mesodermal cell types, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing epithelial tissue from said mammal;
- (b) culturing said epithelial tissue under conditions in which multipotent stem cells proliferate and in which at least 25% of the cells that are not multipotent stem cells die or attach to the culture substrate; and
- (c) continuing culture step (b) until at least 30% of the cells are multipotent stem cells which are self renewing, form non-adherent clusters, express nestin, and can differentiate into neuronal and mesodermal cell types, or progeny of said multipotent stem cells.

19. (Amended) A method of producing a population of at least ten cells, wherein at least 30% of the cells are multipotent stem cells substantially purified from epithelial tissue of a postnatal mammal, or progeny of said multipotent stem cells, wherein said multipotent stem cells are self renewing, form non-adherent clusters, express nestin, and can differentiate into neuronal and mesodermal cell types, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing epithelial tissue from said mammal;
- (b) culturing said epithelial tissue under conditions in which multipotent stem cells proliferate and in which at least 25% of the cells that are not multipotent stem cells die or attach to the culture substrate;